

ADAMS SENTINEL-EXTRA.

THURSDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 17, 1829.

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS, DELIVERED BY GEORGE WOLF,

On his Inauguration as Governor of Pennsylvania, Tuesday, Dec. 15th, 1829.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:

IN assuming upon myself the execution of the important trust, which by the suffrages of my fellow-citizens has been conferred upon me, I avail myself of this solemn occasion, thus publicly, to express to those citizens my grateful acknowledgments for their unmerited kindness, so freely and so signally bestowed, and to assure them of the anxious solicitude I shall ever feel, for their welfare and happiness, and of my unceasing endeavors, whilst in their service, to merit in some measure this distinguished mark of their confidence.

If, in the course of the frequent vicissitudes and changes inseparable from our elective form of government, but salutary and essential to the preservation of its purity, and the faithful administration of its concerns, the wisest and most experienced of our citizens, when called to discharge its highest functions, have not failed to evince those sensations of diffidence and self-distrust, which the magnitude and difficulty of the trust inspired; what feelings of despondency and fearful anxiety must not be awakened in the breast of him, one of the humblest of your citizens, who is about to enter upon the same arduous duties, under circumstances at once adverse, intricate and embarrassing, who can lay no claim to other than the ordinary endowments of nature, and who cannot fail to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies and imperfections.

But if, notwithstanding all the discouraging circumstances by which I feel myself surrounded, an honest zeal for the public good; if an ardent desire to promote the general welfare and happiness of the people; if an assiduous and untiring devotion to the advancement of their best interests; and if an unwearied industry in the faithful discharge of official duties, can, in any measure compensate for the absence of those accomplishments & attainments, so necessary and desirable in the character of a Chief-Magistrate of a great and growing commonwealth, or will in some degree justify the choice which its citizens have made, I trust I may be permitted to say, without incurring the imputation either of vanity or presumption, that such shall not be wanting on my part.

That in the discharge of the various and complicated duties which have been assigned to me, I shall often err, admits of no doubt: to be exempt from error is not the lot of frail humanity. Voluntary errors will not be committed. For such as are involuntary, and result from the weakness and imperfection of our nature, I shall bespeak the indulgence and forbearance of my fellow-citizens, firmly relying on their candor, intelligence, & discrimination, to ascribe them to the proper source.

In administering the affairs of the government, the Constitutions of this State and of the Union, which, in your presence, I have, this day, solemnly sworn to support, will be my guides. The immutable principles of justice & of equal rights, on which they are based, will be zealously guarded and maintained. The powers vested in the executive branch of the government by the Constitution, will be exercised with that caution and discretion which their importance demands; and so, as in no case to transcend the limits prescribed by that instrument. All laws, the execution of which falls within the scope of executive duties, will be carried into effect, in such manner as to ensure equal and exact justice to all.

The republican maxims, that the people are the source of all political power; that governments are instituted for their benefit; that those who administer them are their servants, bound to obey their will, so far as that will can be distinctly known or ascertained; accountable to them for all their official acts, and responsible to them for all wilful omissions of duty, have been, and will continue to be, cherished by me.

In the distribution of the Executive patronage, the most delicate, and certainly the least desirable of all its operations, the public good alone will be consulted; selfish considerations will be repudiated and rejected. Offices have been established by the constitu-

tion and laws of the commonwealth, for the accommodation and convenience of the people, and to aid in carrying into effect the operations of the government in all its various ramifications and details. Sinecures never were contemplated either by the framers of the Constitution, or the Legislature. No individual, therefore, can expect to be appointed to an office of trust or profit, until he shall have established a character for moral integrity, industry, sobriety, and a capacity to discharge his official duties personally and without a reliance on others. Justice to the public, as well as the moral character of the State itself, demand a rigid adherence to this rule; and it is earnestly hoped and expected, that every good citizen of the Commonwealth will contribute his aid to carry it into complete operation and effect. He who has been dishonest in his private transactions,

or has proved unfaithful in the matter of a private trust, can have no claim to public confidence; it would be inequitable and unjust, that the idle, incompetent individual should be suffered to pocket the emoluments of an office, the duties of which he has neither the capacity nor the inclination to perform, whilst the competent, industrious citizen, who would discharge its duties with honor to himself and advantage to the public, is doomed to be overlooked and neglected. Sound morality as well as public policy require, that the ruinous and desolating sin of intemperance should be discontinued and rooted out of society, not encouraged by the bestowal of places of trust and profit on its votaries. It is manifest from the nature and design of our civil institutions, that those to whom any part of the public business is entrusted, should be such as would make it their business, not only thoroughly to understand their duty, but who will, also, industriously and faithfully attend to its performance.

To maintain relations with the general government and those of our sister states, at once friendly and conciliatory, will be my constant aim; to sustain the former in all its measures, tending to promote the general welfare, as it will be my duty, so also will it accord with my inclination and best wishes; should encroachments unhappily be made by either, on the rights of the state or any of its citizens, they will be resisted in a manner becoming the dignity of a great and independent sovereignty.

With regard to the great question of internal improvement (about which there appears to be some diversity of opinion, and upon which it may be expected that I should express my own,) whether considered in reference to the powers of the general government, to aid in constructing works of internal improvement, of a national character, by the appropriations of money for such objects; or in reference to the policy of this state, in constructing useful and necessary works of improvement within its own limits, at its own expense, and under the immediate supervision and control of its constituted authorities, I can truly say, that I have never doubted the former, and that nothing has yet transpired to induce me to question the latter.

That Pennsylvania, patriotic, enlightened, and prosperous, blessed with a constitution securing to her citizens the highest privileges man is destined to enjoy upon the earth; containing a population, intelligent, industrious and enterprising, and possessing a soil capable of the highest possible state of cultivation, rich in her agricultural, her manufacturing and mineral productions, is destined, at no remote period, by a wise course of legislation and a skilful husbanding of her resources, to become, as from her local position and physical advantages she so pre-eminently enjoys, she of right ought to be, the brightest star in our political galaxy, can scarcely admit of a doubt. First in the march of internal improvement, Pennsylvania will be the last to recede from a system which promises so much, and from which, by pursuing a judicious and prudent course of policy, there is so little to fear. A system of internal improvement, progressive in its character, advancing towards its final consummation, steadily but surely, conducted skilfully and on principles of prudence and economy; not suffered in its course to outstrip the credit, or to impair the public confidence in the fiscal operations of the state, ought, in my opinion, to form a prominent feature in our state policy.

The internal wealth and resources of the state, consisting of agricultural pro-

ductions, which may be increased to an incalculable extent; of iron ore and coal, anthracite and bituminous, imbedded in our hills and our valleys, almost without limit and without stint; besides a variety of other valuable productions which are constantly developing themselves, cannot be made available to their possessors, or to add to the general wealth and prosperity of the community, without the aid of such artificial communications as will facilitate their transportation and conveyance from the places where they are produced or deposited, to such points and places where they may be profitably converted and disposed of to the uses for which God and Nature has designed them. But to open such communications must be the work of time; to enable our citizens to reap the golden harvest, anticipated, we must not suffer our impatience to force us into mea-

sures which in the end may greatly retard, if not entirely defeat the object we have so much at heart—by attempting too much we shall only embarrass our operations, and protract the accomplishment of our designs; the credit of the state, and the public confidence in its ability to meet its engagements, must keep pace with the spirit of improvement, to ensure its success; should these fail, the system itself must sink—against such a state of things it is our duty to guard. As a real friend to a system of internal improvement such as I have described; as one to whom the character as well as the prosperity of the state, and the comforts and conveniences of all its citizens, cannot fail to be subjects of the deepest solicitude and concern, I would take occasion respectfully to suggest, whether we would not be more likely to ensure success to the system itself, by confining, for the present, all our energies as well as all the means of the state to the works already commenced, and to the gradual extension of such as require to be extended to answer their original design, or to render them useful and profitable to the public; thereby ensuring their speedy completion and securing to the treasury an additional source of revenue which will relieve it from embarrassment, inspire confidence in its resources, and give a new impetus to the public mind and feeling in favor of commencing and conducting to successful completion, hereafter, other important objects of enterprise and public utility.

To aid, encourage, and protect agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, the three important branches of our national industry, as well as the great sources of wealth and prosperity to our citizens, and I may add, of real independence to our common country, are powers to be exercised exclusively by Congress, and with that care and caution which shall secure to the one, equal advantages with the other. It cannot be denied, however, that the latter branch of our industry, and which is of vital importance to the people of Pennsylvania, is still in a great measure in its infancy, and requires the artificial stimulus of legislation, to bring it to that state of perfection, in which it may take its rank in point of prosperity with, and contribute to the successful advancement of, the other two. It is believed that the late acts of Congress, "in alteration of the several acts imposing duties on imports" has gone far to produce the result desired; the efficacy of the provisions of the act just mentioned to give vigor and permanency to our manufacturing establishments, will soon be tested, and should the experiment made, be found inadequate to attain the end desired, we may safely confide in that august body, within whose province the subject rests, that the proper remedy will be applied. The talents and enlightened patriotism, too, of the delegation representing this state in the national legislature, give ample assurance, that the honor of the state, and the true interests of its citizens, have been deposited in safe hands, and that they will neither be compromised nor neglected. That the protecting system will continue to be cherished by the mass of our citizens, who cannot fail to perceive that on the permanency of that course of policy, their best interests will materially depend, can scarcely admit of a doubt; and so long as the people continue to cherish the system, there will be little cause to fear, that their representatives will run counter to it. Although the legislatures of the different states can exercise no immediate control over this important and deeply interesting subject, yet the expression of its opinions

and views by the legislature of a state to the Congress of the United States, in relation to the great measures of national policy depending before that body, will not fail to command a respectful attention, and be received with that deference which is due from the national government to the interests and wants of one of its constituent members. There are, however, other branches of productive industry, which properly fall within the scope of the municipal regulations of the state governments, and over which a salutary influence may be shed by legislative enactments, tending to protect those engaged in them against imposition and loss, and to ensure to their labor its legitimate return: such are some of the mechanical arts and other branches of business pursued by the working classes, immediately connected with them. Every legislative enactment, having for its object, to foster and encourage this useful and valuable portion of our citizens, is an incentive to a laudable emulation to excel in every species of industry embraced within its provisions; and it is a duty of the first obligation imposed upon those entrusted with the administration of Government, to infuse into the ranks of industry, a spirit of filial confidence, that their interests will not be treated with indifference and neglect by those who are bound to protect them, and to furnish the assurance, that they, too, are objects of care and solicitude of those who emphatically are the guardians of the people's rights.

It will not be expected, that on an occasion such as the present, any thing should be said in reference to the state of the commonwealth, or the measures to be submitted to the deliberations of the legislature during the present session; the message of my respected predecessor has presented both in detail. But I would call the attention of that portion of my fellow citizens, who compose the legislative branch of the government, to one or two topics, the first of which, it seems to me, no executive magistrate can abstain from pressing on the attention of the legislature, without being justly chargeable with a culpable neglect of duty: I mean that clause of the constitution which enjoins that "the legislature shall as soon as conveniently may be, provide by law for the establishment of schools throughout the state, in such manner that the poor may be taught gratis," an injunction which I trust no statesman will disregard, or philanthropist treat with neglect. This call has been so frequently made by the eminent statesmen who have preceded me in the executive department of this government, that I fear a repetition of it now, will be considered as forming a subject too stale and hackneyed to be productive of any beneficial effects; but as some of those calls have heretofore produced favorable results, may I not be permitted to indulge the hope, that the enlightened body I am now addressing, will turn their attention to the injunction itself, as being one, which, considering the high source from which it emanates, is entitled to their unqualified deference and respect. The philanthropic design and patriotic intention of the framers of the constitution cannot, certainly, be passed over with indifference by any legislative body which views the subject of education, in all its important bearings, as well with regard to the evils resulting to society from a want of that moral and scholastic instruction to which a large portion of our citizens, who are now destitute of the means of obtaining them, is doomed; as in reference to the stability and permanency of our free institutions, themselves, which must always materially depend on the virtue and intelligence of the people. It is an incontrovertible truth, that civil liberty never can flourish in the same soil with ignorance; to be duly appreciated and rationally enjoyed, the ample privileges it confers, and the rich blessings it imparts, must be felt and understood; without the lights of education, the only true source of correct information, this never can be accomplished. That legislature, therefore, which shall have devised and brought to maturity a system of education, by means of primary or common schools, to be established throughout the state, and supported by its own munificence and liberality on a scale so broad and extensive as to reach every village and neighborhood, and which shall ensure to every indigent child in the commonwealth the rudiments of learning at least, will not only have contributed largely to the

perpetuating of our free institutions, but reared to itself a monument of imperishable fame.

Our judiciary system, too, would seem to require revision, and ought, it is believed, to form another subject for the serious deliberations of the Legislature. Under the present system, the time of the judges of the supreme court is so constantly engrossed and occupied, and their labors have become so onerous and incessant, that there is no opportunity afforded for reading or reflection, which, to inspire confidence in their decisions on new and important questions, which are constantly arising, and which are to become the settled law of the land, are all essential and important; besides, the constant accumulation of business arising from obvious causes, notwithstanding the efforts of the judges to keep it down, and the unavoidable delays consequent thereon, are becoming evils of no small magnitude. Whether establishing a tribunal to sit as a court of errors and appeals; increasing the number of judges on the bench of the supreme court, or so organizing the present courts as to ensure a more equal distribution of labor among the judges of the supreme court, and those of the common pleas, having a tendency to expedite the public business, and to give more vigor and efficiency to the administration of the laws, would afford the better remedy, is a question submitted with great deference to the wisdom of the Legislature.

With an anxious desire on my part, to cultivate a spirit of friendship, harmony and good will with all those connected with the administration of the government, and more especially with those who constitute its legislative department, I pledge myself, that to all their measures tending to promote the public good, I will yield a cheerful and hearty concurrence, asking in return a reciprocity of good feeling on their part, together with their aid and cooperation in such measures, tending to the same object, as the Executive may from time to time find it necessary and expedient to recommend.

Permit me, fellow citizens, before closing this address, to congratulate you on the happy state and condition of the commonwealth, and of our common country. Whilst in the old world we find one portion of it has been visited with the desolating scourge of war, and drenched with the blood of its unoffending subjects, and other portions of it have been convulsed by internal commotions, and risings of the people, driven to desperation by the chilling hand of poverty, or the more deadly and desolate grasp of absolute famine and want, the natural concomitants of arbitrary power and oppression—we have been permitted to enjoy the inestimable blessings of a profound peace; of prosperity unexampled in the history of nations; of a government based immediately on the will of the people, and administered on the purest principles of republican simplicity: of laws mild and humane, administered peaceably but promptly, and executed even unto the death of the offender, without tumult or confusion, and without producing other sensations in the public mind, than those of acquiescence in, or submission to, the justice of the penalties they inflict; of liberty, civil and religious, secured to us by written constitutions, bearing in their train the freedom of speech, the freedom of the Press, and last, though not least, the free exercise of the rights of conscience—privileges which, it is devoutly hoped, no American citizen will ever relinquish, but with his life, whatever may be the specious pretext to induce the sacrifice. In short, we inhabit a country, which, from its earliest infancy to the present day, Providence, by the most signal manifestations of its goodness and protecting care, seems to have distinctly marked for its own. And permit me here emphatically to say, that if there is a nation on the face of the earth, which, more than any other, is bound to be devoted to its God by all the sacred ties of gratitude and love, that nation is the American people.

Having now, fellow-citizens, briefly delineated to you some of the general principles, by which, in the course of my administration, I shall be governed, and adverted to others which will be cherished and maintained, I shall, in the fear, and, as I humbly trust, under the guidance and direction of that all-wise Being, in whose hands are the destinies of men and of nations, proceed to the discharge of my duty.

Gen. SAMUEL M'KEAN, of Bradford county, has been appointed Secretary of the Commonwealth, by Governor Wolf.